

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 2042

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, JM, US
SUBJECT: NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER SAYS CRIME A LEFT-OVER FROM
DESTABILIZATION EFFORTS

1. SENATOR DUDLEY THOMPSON, MINISTER OF NATIONAL SECURITY,
TOLD STUDENTS AND ANCILLARY (I.E., CLERICAL AND CUSTODIAL)
STAFF AT THE MONA CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST
INDIES (UWI) ON FEBRUARY 17 THAT THE PRESENT HIGH LEVEL OF
CRIME CONFRONTING THE COUNTRY IS "A HANG-OVER OF IMPERIALIST
EFFORTS" TO DESTABILIZE JAMAICA. SPEAKING BEFORE A MEETING
CALLED BY THE GUILD OF STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY AND
ALLIED WORKERS UNION (UAWU), AN ARM OF MARXIST TREVOR MUNROE'S
WORKERS LIBERATION LEAGUE (WLL), THOMPSON WENT ON TO SAY
"...THE IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE TO CONTROL NEVER STOPS AND
THEIR AIM IS TO SUPPRESS THE WORKING CLASS OF THE
WORLD BY PROVIDING A BARRIER BETWEEN THE PRIVILEGED AND
THE NON-PRIVILEGED." THE MINISTER ALSO SAID THAT WHILE
CRIME HAS INCREASED, "...CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN
THE PRESS HAD DONE NEARLY AS MUCH AS THE CRIMINALS
THEMSELVES IN SPREADING ALARM..."; SINCE THOMPSON HAD
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JUST MADE A REFERENCE TO "THE GLEANER", THE GOVERNMENT'S
MOST RIGOROUS CRITIC, HE LEFT LITTLE DOUBT AS TO THE
IDENTITY OF THE "CERTAIN ELEMENTS".

2. COMMENT: THOMPSON'S EGREGIOUS REMARKS WERE NEATLY TAILORED
TO PLEASE HIS LARGELY LEFTIST AUDIENCE, AND TO DIVERT THEIR
ATTENTION AS MUCH AS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE AWAY FROM THE REASON

FOR HIS VISIT TO UWI. THE MONA CAMPUS HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF AN APPARENTLY SUDDEN INCREASE IN CRIME DIRECTED AGAINST FACULTY AND STUDENTS, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH LED TO A DEMAND FOR ADDITIONAL POLICE PROTECTION. WHILE THOMPSON CLEARLY WANTED TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE CALL FOR PROTECTION, IT APPEARS THAT, AS A PROMINENT MEMBER OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, HE ALSO WANTED TO ASSURE HIS AUDIENCE THAT THE PRESENT LEVEL OF CRIME CAN HARDLY BE THE SOLE RESULT OF THE SORRY STATE OF THE JAMAICAN ECONOMY AND THE SEVERE SOCIAL STRAINS NOW CONFRONTING THE COUNTRY. THOMPSON KNEW THAT THE UWI AUDIENCE WOULD BE QUITE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE IDEA THAT "DESTABILIZATION" WAS A FAR MORE IMPORTANT CAUSE.

3. THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOR PARTY (JLP) WAS FAR LESS WILLING TO DO SO. PERCY BRODERICK, LEADER OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DESCRIBED THE SPEECH IN A STATEMENT ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 19 AS "... AN EXAMPLE OF THE IRRESPONSIBLE APPROACH AND THE CONTEMPT FOR WHICH THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT HOLDS THE PUBLIC". DEMANDING EVIDENCE OF "...IMPERIALIST EFFORTS...TO DESTABILIZE JAMAICA", BRODERICK SAID, "IF THE SENATOR WISHES TO RETAIN ANY RESPECTABILITY IN THIS HIS NEW AND LAST (SIC) POST, HE MUST REFUSE THE TEMPTATION OF MAKING SPEECHES FILLED WITH THOSE OLD TIRED POLITICAL CHICHES."

4. AN EMBASSY OFFICER ENCOUNTERED THE MINISTER VERY BRIEFLY
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ON FEBRUARY 20 AND INQUIRED AS TO THE BASIS FOR THE FEBRUARY 17 SPEECH. THE MINISER MUBLED SOMETHING ABOUT BEING QUOTED OUT OF CONTEXT--ALTHOUGH HIS PERFORMANCE HAD BEEN TELEVISED--AND PROMPTLY CHANGED THE SUBJECT.
IRVING

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